

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Claims 56-74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Albert et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0229729) in view of Theimer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,493,692).

As indicated in paragraph [0001] of the specification, the subject patent application is a continuation of application no. 09/382,684, filed on August 25, 1999, which is a continuation of application no. 08/842,113, filed on April 28, 1997. The filing date of Albert et al. is June 18, 2002 and thus Albert et al. is not prior art to the pending claims of this application. Consequently, the rejection of claims 56-74 is improper and must be withdrawn.

Applicant does not acquiesce in the statements in the office action purporting to find correspondence between Albert et al. and/or Theimer et al. and the claimed subject matter.

At least for the above reasons, favorable office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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